

SELECTMEN'S WORKSHOP
Monday, March 20, 2006
Conference A, Memorial Town Hall
Spencer, Massachusetts 01562

Present: Selectmen Adams, Herl, Cloutier, Gaucher, Gagnon; Town Administrator Terenzini.

At 7:05 p.m. Chairman Adams called the workshop to order.

Motion by Chairman Adams to enter into executive session to discuss collective bargaining, to reconvene for public session; seconded by Mr. Gagnon. Roll call vote: Adams—yes; Herl—yes; Cloutier—yes; Gagnon—yes; Gaucher—yes.

The executive session ended at 7:25 p.m.

1. Citizen Concern: Mr. Joseph DeCoff I had asked to address the Board on privatization and reduction in force relative to the custodial service. He wanted to ask the Board to vote against the privatization. The job had already been cut from two people to one and this became a unique position. He asked how a savings figure could be set up when the bids had not yet come in and many of the tasks could not be privatized (i.e., changing bulbs, etc.). He also spoke of difficulties in getting a “strapped” highway department to pick up any of these pieces of work.

2. Article 20 (ATM) and Fire Fees: Fire Chief Parsons was present. He reviewed budget page 47 (Fee Schedule) and the need to have fees in place relative to the carbon monoxide law. This was set for a March 27 vote. Mr. Terenzini advised that Town Counsel did have some changes to paragraph D of Article 20—these changes would follow as soon as possible.

3. Personnel Board: Carol McPherson, Stephanie Ford, and Eleanor O'Connor were present. It was noted that for the last eight years the Personnel Board has been using Department of Labor CPI—all urban consumers—as the index. Before that, they were pulling a number from the air. This standard was not perfect, but no one has come up with a better standard. Mrs. McPherson pointed out the average was still within the range of union settlement. Mrs. McPherson said she had no problem with another standard *but* you cannot jump around shopping for the lowest rate each year.

Mr. Cloutier said he cannot agree this was the “right” standard, but acknowledged there is no index that focuses on central Massachusetts. Chairman Adams asked them to continue to look at the most appropriate standards and Mr. Cloutier asked them to be sure to point out the eight-year average when discussed at Town Meeting.

Mrs. McPherson gave them a schedule of how they were proceeding with the updated by-laws. [April 5th for public input and April 13th for final draft.] The SelectBoard asked for draft copies at the Personnel Board's earliest convenience.

4. Article 10 (ATM): Board of Health members Lynda Laine and John Wilson, Animal Control Officer Carol Gaucher and Assistant Animal Control Officer Christine Pilling were present. Ms. Laine spoke of the need for a resource for Animal Control on the more aggressive dogs and described the public hearing process and those who participated. January 1, 2007, was agreed upon for the effective date.

5. Review of Assessors Reorganization: Donald Clough and Dick Foisey were present. It was noted that Mary Williams' absence was not a lack of support. She might be interested in the career assessor job and did not want to appear engaged in any sort of self-serving lobbying.

6. Library: Mary Baker-Wood was present. She reviewed the changing role of the public library, the challenge they are facing, and how the proposed staffing could help them address that challenge.

Mr. Cloutier asked if we had a formal drug and alcohol policy and if not would we please work on one. The Personnel Board noted this was on their work list.

At 8:55 p.m., motion by Mr. Herl to adjourn; seconded by Mr. Gagnon. Motion passed, 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Carter Terenzini, Town Administrator

_____Chairman

_____Vice Chairman

_____Clerk

_____Member

_____Member